Access: From Winthrop, drive west on Highway 20 for 33 miles, the trailhead is on the south side of the highway, just 0.8 mile west of Washington Pass Overlook Road.

Route Description: After leaving the parking lot the trail parallels the highway for a short distance then begins to climb uphill in big timber. The forest varies from heavy timber to scattered larch near the lake.

Highlights: This hike offers beautiful views of Cutthroat Peak, Early Winter Spires, and Liberty Bell Mountain. The lake is a deep turquoise blue with a backdrop of towering rock walls. This is a classic fall color hike in late September - early October when the hills are painted red and gold.

Specific Hazards/Difficulties: The trail branches at about 1.5 miles. Left trail leads to climbing routes up Liberty Bell Mountain. Hikers should stay to the right on the main trail to Blue Lake. Overnight camping at the lake is prohibited.

Northwest Forest Pass required pursuant to 36 CFR 261.17.

Length: 2.2 miles/3.7 km.

Season: Late July - September.


Restrictions: Trail closed to pack and saddle stock, motorized and mechanized travel. No overnight camping within 0.25 mile of the lake.

Trailhead Facilities: Parking area, self-pay station, bulletin board, interpretive information, picnic table, outhouse and trash can.